



June 13, 2018

Dear Friends,

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) wishes to announce the completion of the design phase and the anticipated timeline for construction by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) on the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway, a multi-use pathway along the former Boston & Maine Railroad Line in Watertown and Cambridge. Construction is scheduled to start in late summer/early fall of 2018.

The completed Greenway will extend from the Arlington Street/Nichols Avenue/Crawford Street intersection in Watertown to the entrance of the Cambridge Water Department on Fresh Pond Parkway in Cambridge, for a total of 1.25 miles (6,600 feet). The trail will follow the existing railroad right-of-way (ROW) alignment, which runs through residential neighborhoods and some commercial and industrial areas. Two at-grade roadway crossings will be sited along the trail, at Arlington Street and Cottage Street. Three additional below-grade crossings will be located at Grove Street, Mount Auburn Street, and Huron Avenue.

The existing railroad ROW contains remnants of ballast, track, and ties that are overgrown with vegetation. Improvements will include removal of the existing rail material and construction of a multi-purpose trail. Construction will include the removal of existing track and ties, the addition of four-to-eight inches of clean gravel for the trail sub-base, and the addition of four inches of pavement. The resulting Greenway will be a 12-foot-wide paved trail, with two-feet-wide grassed shoulders on each side, significant vegetation, and linear stormwater Best Management Practices-guided improvements throughout the corridor.

The purpose of the project is to enhance pedestrian and bicycle movement in Watertown and Cambridge, while providing an alternative travel option for commuters and recreational users. The trail will offer additional opportunities for transportation and passive and active recreation and physical activity, while promoting community and economic growth through increased connectivity. The multi-use Greenway will provide an important regional connection linking the Charles River path system, the Minuteman Bikeway, the Alewife Greenway, and the Mystic River Reservation into an interconnected off-road pathway network.

As background, DCR's consultant, Vanasse Hangen Brustein Inc., conducted a survey in April of 2015 for the proposed trail alignment and completed the design of the path in September of 2017. During the design phase, DCR held three public information meetings, in 2015 and 2016. Significant input from the public, including local municipalities, organizations and committees, and abutters was used to advise the design. As a result of feedback from the public, a connection to Holworthy Street has been included in the design, as well as provisions for future lighting.

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Although DCR will continue to be involved in the project, MassDOT will be responsible for the construction phase. If you have questions or concerns during construction, please contact Donny Dailey, MassDOT Liaison-Highway Division in the Office of Government and Public Affairs, at 617-945-4272 or Donny.Dailey2@dot.state.ma.us.

We appreciate your interest and support for this important new multi-use pathway project and regional connector.

Sincerely,



Leo P. Roy
Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L.P.R." followed by "Roy". Below the signature, the name "Leo P. Roy" is printed in a smaller, sans-serif font, with "Commissioner" printed directly underneath it.